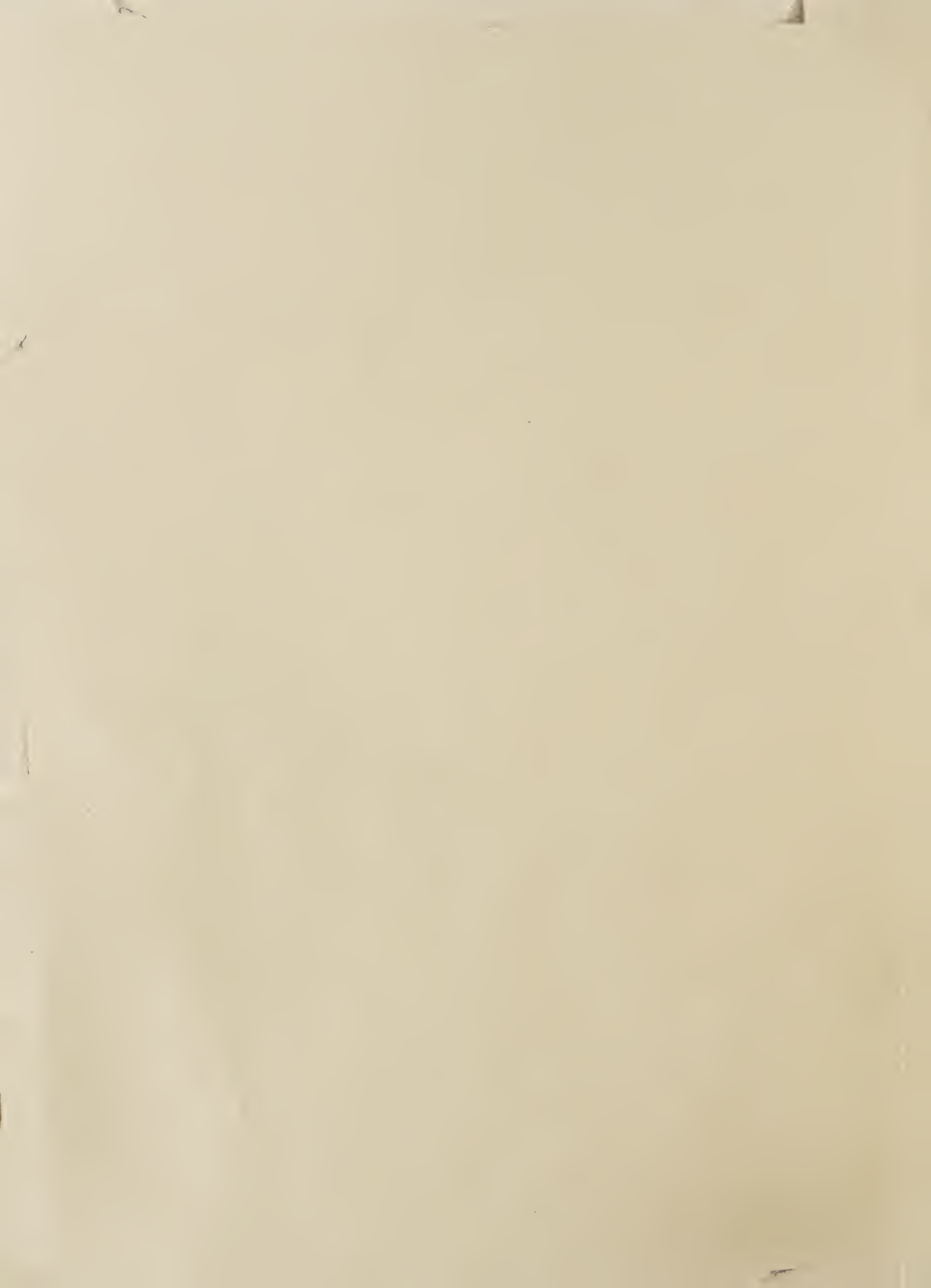


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. . . . events of interest to **USDA managers**

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OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR ADMINISTRATION

ISSUE #114 --- MARCH

## MANAGEMENT COUNCIL CONFERENCE

The Management Council will meet March 19 and 20, at the Fort Myer Officers' Club in Virginia. The agenda includes a variety of topics such as improving management effectiveness, new administration's budget initiatives and resource limitations, Civil Service Reform, and prevention of fraud, waste, and abuse. (Contact, Preston Davis, OSDBU, 77117)

## NEW PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS

The Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP) is drafting the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) to replace in 1982 the current system of procurement regulations. The purpose is to reduce the proliferation of regulations, eliminate conflicts and redundancies. FAR will provide regulations that are simple, clear, and understandable. Contracting officers will get substantial responsibilities and latitude in procurement decisions. This also entails a complete revision of the Agriculture Procurement Regulations (AGPR) and agency supplements to the AGPR. These changes will affect the way USDA will do business for years to come. Work has already begun on revising the AGPR. The Procurement Division of O&F and key procurement personnel from the agencies, are working on these changes. (Contact, Jim Fisher, O&F, 77527)

## ENERGY CONSERVATION

Overall agency consumption in the USDA declined by 4.8 percent in the first quarter of FY 81, compared with the same period in FY 80. A 35 percent increase in electric consumption was more than offset by declines in gasoline, natural gas and heating oil. Gasoline consumption was actually 22 percent lower, reflecting reduced driving levels and the use of more fuel efficient vehicles.

USDA ENERGY COSTS  
FY 1980

During FY 80, USDA paid \$74 million for energy to operate its facilities, vehicles and equipment. (Contact, Jim Fisher, O&F, 77527)

OPM INTERAGENCY  
TASK FORCE ON  
PRODUCTIVITY

The first meeting of the Task Force was held on February 11, 1981. Speakers included James Green, OPM's Director of Workforce Effectiveness and Development, Jerome Mark, Assistant Commissioner for Productivity and Technology at the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Howard Messner, Assistant Director for Management at OMB. OPM intends to sponsor a number of seminars and to make technical assistance and information concerning productivity measurement available. O&F will advise agency contacts as schedules are released. (Contact, Frank DiGialleonardo, O&F, 382-1175)

SAFETY AND HEALTH  
MANAGEMENT

During the past year the Office of Safety and Health Management (OSHM) has completed major industrial hygiene surveys in the USDA operations. These include the Screwworm Eradication Programs both in Mission, Texas, and Mexico; Golden Nemotode Program in New York; Cartographic units in Maryland, and grain elevators. OSHM provided technical assistance regarding other occupational health problems to agencies. Arrangements have been made with the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to perform similar occupational health hazard evaluations for USDA. Last year, the volume of agency requests for technical assistance in industrial hygiene increased significantly. (Contact Joseph Cindrich, OSHM, 472-7074)

SENIOR EXECUTIVE  
SERVICE

A total of 118 candidates were processed through the Customized Assessment Process (CAP) to select candidates for the Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program. More than 400 people were involved in the process, including consultants, personnel experts, training officers, and others. Successful candidates will now go to the Secretary's Executive Resource Board for final selection. (Contact, Tom Gill, OP, 73285)

FNS COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

FNS is developing a new approach to their civil rights compliance program. It will be presented in written form as a civil rights instruction system with two components. The first is an "Umbrella" 113-1 Instruction, which establishes the overall agency civil rights policy and delegates specific responsibilities for carrying out the program.

The second component is a separate civil rights instruction and specific requirements for each FNS program. The new direction is based on the concepts that (1) civil rights monitoring should be integrated with the routine program reviews; (2) routine compliance review activity should focus on identified problems or potential problem areas; (3) all compliance activities should be consistent and standard for FNS Regional Offices, State agencies and local recipients, and (4) local agency reviews should be conducted by the State agency whenever possible. (Contact, Joseph Bennett, FNS, 76300)

MAJOR UPGRADE FOR THE  
WCC

The Office of Operations and Finance has signed a contract with the Small Business Administration and MISSO, a minority 8-A firm to provide an IBM 3033 large scale computer system for the Washington Computer Center. Delivery is expected in the summer of 1981. This will be a major upgrade of the Center's capability. It is part of Data Services' continuing efforts to service USDA Agencies and Staff Offices. (Contact, Bill Lanus, O&F, 76871)

MORE ON PRODUCTIVITY

In recent years, the Congress has expanded the functions by USDA agencies. This in turn has increased the workload of the staff offices in administration without a corresponding increase in resources. Public expectations also dictate that the government offices function at high levels of productivity.



To address these concerns, the Productivity Task Force (PTF) was created by Dr. Joan S. Wallace, It was charged with assessing the productivity of managerial and professional workers and to make recommendations to enhance their productivity. The staff offices covered were: Operations and Finance, Personnel, Management Staff, Safety and Health Management, Equal Opportunity and Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization.

The PTF was composed of personnel from the staff offices themselves. No outside consultants were used. The task force identified seven sets of factors critical to white collar productivity.

1. Management and organizational structure
2. Utilization of human resources
3. Innovation and technological improvement
4. Quality of work life
5. Equal opportunity
6. Safety and health
7. Security

The PTF developed two coordinated questionnaires for employees and managers, an instrument for surveying client perceptions. The task force interviewed all professionals and managers who were available during the study period for each office. The Office of Operations and Finance was covered by a statistical sample. The data generated was factored into three models, developed by the task force, two of which are computerized.

The Staff Directors were provided with the analytical data pertaining to their offices and identified problems areas. The task force also made specific recommendations to improve productivity in each office. (Contact, Bala Subramanian, 73291)

PLEASE SEND NEW ITEMS FOR THE NEXT ISSUE TO GINA SCIUTO, ROOM 212-E, 73291.